

BOUCHER SECURES \$9.2 MILLION FOR CITIZENS TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE FOR MAJOR EXPANSION OF BROADBAND SERVICES

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Federal Grant Will Enable Installation of 186 Miles of Fiber Optic Cable in Wythe, Pulaski, Giles, Floyd, Montgomery, Roanoke and Botetourt Counties and the City of Radford

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□□□□□□□□□□(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Rick Boucher announced today that, at his urging, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration, through its Recovery Act broadband grant program, is providing a federal grant of \$9,237,760 to Citizens Telephone Cooperative, headquartered in Floyd,

for a major expansion of its broadband network.

“The federal funds will enable the construction of a middle-mile fiber optic network 186 miles in length in Wythe, Pulaski, Giles, Floyd Montgomery, Roanoke and Botetourt Counties and the City of Radford. The project aims to spur new connections and improve high-speed Internet access services for thousands of homes and numerous businesses, schools and other community institutions,” Boucher said.

With the benefit of the federal funds, Citizens will add 186 miles of fiber to its current

fiber optic network, which today includes 246 miles of fiber optic cable. The new middle-mile network will bring broadband lines within a short distance of New River Community College's campuses in Dublin and Christiansburg, Wytheville Community College, Radford University, Virginia Tech, 32 public K-12 schools and several medical facilities, public libraries, and public safety facilities as well as hundreds of homes and businesses.

The new middle mile network will provide these institutions with access to speeds between 10 Mbps and 10 Gbps and will provide many of the institutions with diverse routing, a redundancy which eliminates the potential of network outages.

In addition, the project provides a critical diverse route between open access networks in Virginia, including Mid-Atlantic Broadband, Bristol Virginia Utilities and Citizens Telephone Cooperative, and the Alleghany Highlands fiber optic network for which Congressman Boucher helped to secure \$16 million in federal broadband funds earlier this year.

The total cost of constructing the new middle-mile network is \$11.5 million. In addition to the more than \$9.2 million in federal funds, the remaining funds to complete the project will be provided by the Virginia Tobacco Commission, the New River Valley Network Wireless Authority, a partnership between Giles and Pulaski Counties, and Citizens Telephone Cooperative.

“With the middle-mile fiber optic network in place, it will be possible for

companies to connect to the fiber lines and offer high-speed Internet access services to many homes and businesses that do not have broadband today. Access to high-speed Internet service is critical to achieving our economic development goals for the region. Fiber optic infrastructure makes us more attractive to companies seeking to expand operations and provides new opportunities for local entrepreneurs to telecommute or expand their businesses online.

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